



City of Rockville

## MEMORANDUM

May 27, 2010

TO: Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Mark Charles, Chief of Environmental Management *MC*  
Manisha Tewari, Planner *MT*

VIA: David Levy, Chief of Long Range Planning *DL*

SUBJECT: June 9, 2010 Public Hearing for the Draft  
Water Resources Element (WRE)  
City of Rockville's Comprehensive Master Plan

### Summary of the Water Resources Element

#### **Introduction**

A safe and adequate drinking water supply is critical to the sustainability of existing communities and the viability of planned future growth. Population increases, climate change and pollutant contamination all present potential challenges to maintaining this assured supply. Limited supplies can slow or stop planned development thereby preventing communities from achieving the vision set out in Comprehensive Master Plans and pursue policies to manage growth.

Population and economic growth must align with water quantity and quality. A balance must be struck to avoid over-development that, in turn, leads to water shortages and non-potable water sources. Careful water-resources planning will protect public health, safety and welfare; and support smart-growth land use choices in the future.

## Purpose and Goals of the Water Resources Element

The *Water Resources Element* presents both challenges and solutions for Rockville's community water resources. The City's goals for this plan can be summarized as follows:

- Ensure that existing drinking water and wastewater infrastructure capacity is adequate to accommodate projected growth through the year 2040
- Identify infrastructure concerns, including diminished capacity due to aging, that may restrict predicted population and economic growth
- Protect Rockville's three sub-watersheds and the larger water bodies these sub-watersheds flow into from stormwater impacts
- Promote the reduction of impervious surfaces in the community during redevelopment activities
- Preserve existing open spaces and expand them as opportunities present themselves
- Encourage future population expansion to concentrate in areas designated as mixed use or *smart growth* neighborhoods.
- Comply with requirements of the State of Maryland.

## Scope of the Water Resources Element

The *Water Resources Element* functions as an early warning system that alerts City decision-makers when predicted growth and densities could outpace supply and infrastructure capacities. The document outlines how water supplies, wastewater and stormwater will be managed to support planned growth. The plan is realistic and sustainable over time. The *Water Resources Element* is also intended to identify local laws, policies and actions in need of revision to ensure that future water, wastewater and stormwater needs are met, while protecting local and regional watersheds and related habitat.

## Organization of the Water Resources Element

The *Water Resources Element* is organized into 5 chapters. **Chapter One** presents the efforts, goals, organization and consistency with the existing Comprehensive Master Plan. **Chapter Two** presents an overview of the general physical and planning circumstances surrounding Rockville and provides the context for this document. **Chapter Three** describes Rockville's drinking water program, including current and projected water demand, the City's available water supplies, the Rockville water treatment plant, the water distribution system, known concerns about long-term capacity regarding all of these facilities, our current plans to address those concerns.

**Chapter Four** addresses Rockville's current and projected domestic sewage collection and treatment needs, the capacity of existing city sewers to carry these loads, wastewater treatment provided by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission and the District of

Columbia Water and Sewer Authority. The Chapter also identifies concerns about the long-term capacity of these facilities and our current plans to address those concerns.

Finally, **Chapter Five** addresses the many aspects of stormwater management and the wide variety of actions Rockville is currently pursuing to address potential pollutant loads to the City's three sub-watersheds (Rock Creek, Cabin John Creek and Watts Branch) that flow to the Potomac River and then into the Chesapeake Bay, as well as groundwater underlying the City's footprint. The Chapter includes steps the City anticipates taking to further enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the stormwater program.

### **Public Testimony for the Water Resources Element**

On June 9, 2010, the Planning Commission is holding Public Hearings for two new State-required elements to the City of Rockville's Comprehensive Master Plan, per Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland, as amended by House Bill (HB 1141) in 2006.

The first Public Hearing will be for the draft Municipal Growth Element (MGE). The second Public Hearing will be for the Water Resources Element (WRE). The Planning Commission will accept testimony from the public on both elements. This testimony will be recorded and considered by the Planning Commission on its upcoming work session, along with public testimony received through other means.

The public has four methods by which it may give testimony. They include:

- In person on June 9, 2010 at the Planning Commission meeting, which begins at 7:00pm and is held at Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue;
- Online, by going to the City's Web page for these Elements; at <http://www.rockvillemd.gov/masterplan/elements/index.html>, and clicking on "Send comments online";
- By email, to [masterplan@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:masterplan@rockvillemd.gov), giving full name and address; or
- By mail, to Long Range Planning Division, CPDS, 111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850.

We are currently in the middle of a 60-day comment period during which the State, County, surrounding jurisdictions, and interested parties have an opportunity to provide input. Till date, staff has not received any input from the public or any jurisdiction.

### **Background**

Every municipality in Maryland with planning authority is required to adopt the MGE and WRE into its comprehensive plan by October 1, 2010. Failing to do so may result in the suspension of a municipality's right to rezone property until the municipality has complied with the requirement. Additional information on State requirements, including on these two new elements, can be found at:

<http://www.mdp.state.md.us/OurWork/CompPlans/Requirements.shtml>.

The MGE and WRE documents and other relevant information can be found online at the City Web site, at <http://www.rockvillemd.gov/masterplan/elements/index.html>.

### **How the Public has been Notified**

As of the date of this memorandum, the following outreach efforts have been undertaken to ensure that the public has been notified that the draft elements have been produced, and that public testimony is invited:

- On April 9 and 10, 2010, the draft MGE and WRE documents were mailed to relevant recipients with the State of Maryland, Montgomery County, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission – Montgomery, and the City of Gaithersburg.
- On April 12, 2010, the Planning Commission was alerted by email that the documents had been released, and a link was provided on the City's Web page.
- Both documents were posted on the City's Web site on April 12, 2010.
- Announcements on both elements were sent out on April 13, 2010 to Rockville's LISTSERV, consisting of email addresses of individuals, groups and interested parties within and outside the City.
- On April 16, 2010, both documents were sent to the Planning Commission and the Mayor and Council as part of the April 28 Planning Commission packets.
- The May/June 2010 edition of Rockville Reports announced the June 9 Planning Commission Public Hearing and provided information on the elements.
- On May 11, the WRE was distributed to the City of Rockville Environment Commission.
- The outlines of the MGE and WRE were presented to the Planning Commission at the May 12, 2010 meeting, which was televised on TRC11.
- On May 25, 2010, copies of both elements were provided to the Rockville Library to include in the reference section.
- The legal notice for the June 9, 2010 public hearing of the MGE and WRE was published in the Rockville Gazette on May 26, 2010.
- An information flyer regarding the upcoming June 9, 2010 public hearing has been developed for distribution from the City booth at Hometown Holidays during Memorial Day weekend.

Staff in Public Works remains available to answer any questions regarding the WRE.

### **Next Steps**

Staff recommends that the record remain open until June 16, 2010. Staff will compile the entire record for the Planning Commission's review of the elements at the June 23, 2010 work session. Staff will also address the comments already received from Commissioner Hill in the memorandum for the June 23 work session.

The entire schedule is presented below. It contains one revision, which is to move the Mayor and Council Introduction and Adoption date from September 27 to September 20,

in order to provide the Mayor and Council more opportunity for discussion. Following the schedule will permit the City to meet the State deadline of October 1.

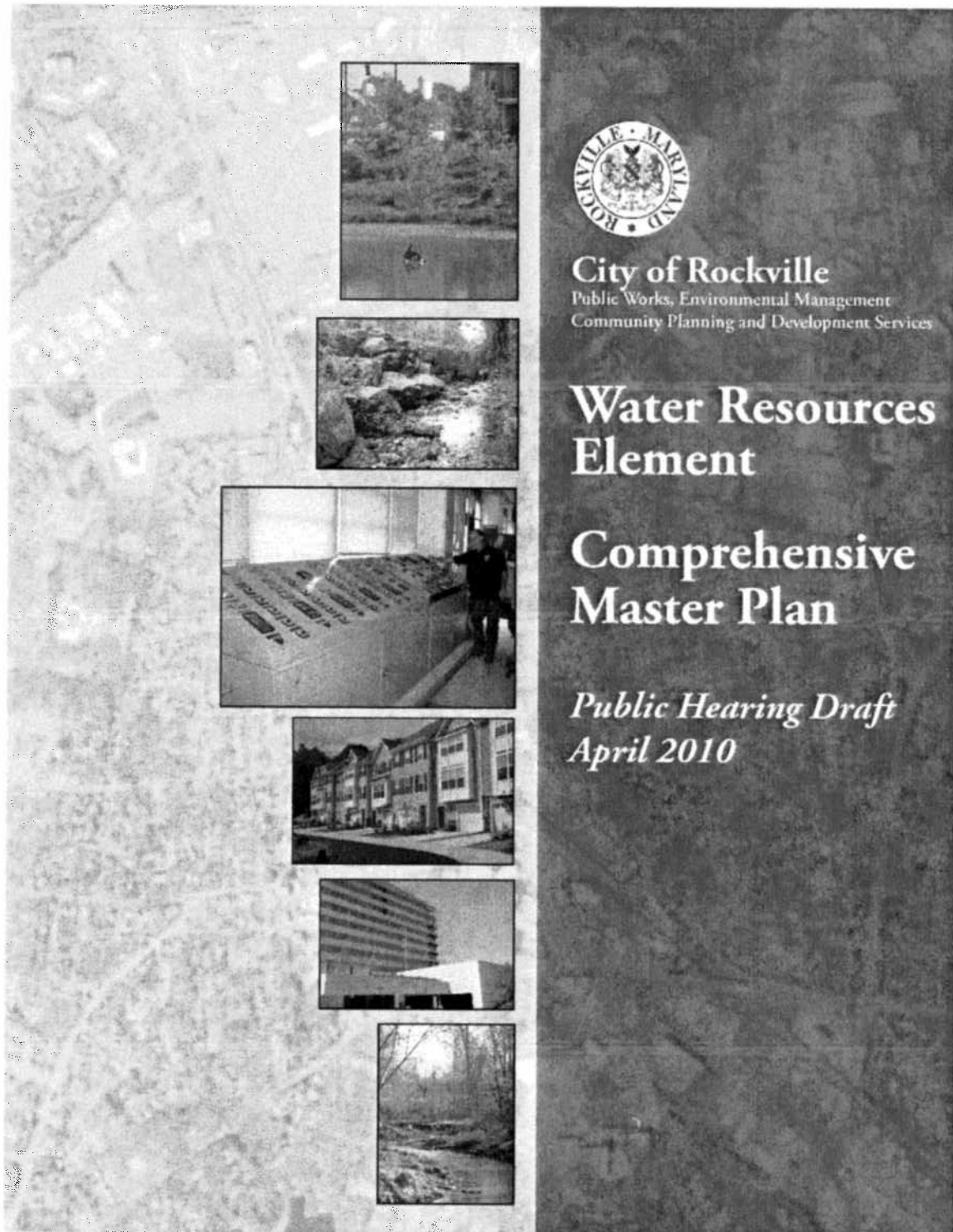
June 9, 2010	Planning Commission Public Hearing
June 16, 2010	Planning Commission Close Public Record
June 23, 2010	Planning Commission Discussion and Instructions to Staff
July 14, 2010	Planning Commission Decision, and Recommendation to Mayor and Council.
July 19, 2010	Presentation to Mayor and Council
August 2, 2010	Mayor and Council Public Hearing
August 16, 2010	Mayor and Council Close Public Record
September 13, 2010	Mayor and Council Discussion and Instructions to Staff
September 20, 2010	Mayor and Council Introduction and Adoption
September 28, 2010	Convey MGE and WRE to Maryland Department of Planning in compliance with October 1, 2010 deadline.

### **Recommendation**

Conduct the Public Hearings for the WRE, accept testimony, and close the public record on June 16, 2010.

### **Enclosure**

Public Hearing Draft of the Water Resources Element



**Note:**

A copy of the Public Hearing Draft of the Water Resources Element was provided to the Commission on April 16, 2010. Please let us know if you need additional copies. A pdf file of the WRE will be included with the June 9, 2010 meeting agenda at <http://www.rockvillemd.gov/government/commissions/pc/10-schedule.html> for public review and comment.